

# The Omen Vol 46 Issue 4



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Zombifacation (nerb)- the act of becoming a zombie due to 1) Finals; 2) Applications of any kind 3) Div; 4) Hampshire; 5) Ressurrection from the dead or completion of 1-3; 6) An actual zombie pathogen (not necessarily a virus, fungi are also promising)

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**Staff Box: (In order of appearance)**

Chloe: You shall never take me alive!

Sara: Howler <3 Omen

Grace: "I love you Omen."

Front Cover: Chloe Omelchuck

Back Cover: Shelley Rosen

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to [omen@hampshire.edu](mailto:omen@hampshire.edu), or Chloe's mailbox (0369)

**Policy**

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited, and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish.

Your submission must include the name you use around campus: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Thursday nights in the basement of Merrill in the company of a computer with an extremely inadequate monitor. You should come. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on other Thursdays in Saga, the post office, or on the door of your mod.

**THE OFFICIAL OMEN HAIKU:**

*Views in the Omen* (5)

*Do not necessarily* (7)

*Reflect the staff's views* (5)

# EDITORIAL

Chloe Anne Omelchuck

Hey Everyone,  
I'm a little sad that this is the last Omen issue for this semester. Not only does it signal the end to my first semester as (kind-of) editor, but it also is coming on the heels of a significant event for Hampshire as a community.

Thank you all those who submitted things to this issue. The Omen is a platform for any and all opinions, and I'm glad you found the courage (and time) to publish those opinions, especially in such an emotional time for this campus. I very much wish that this wasn't the last issue so that a "conversation" could take place in the Omen with continued discussion and comments based on what has been published in this issue. If you have a response to anything published in this issue or have any additional thoughts to publish, please feel free to send them in. They will be published in the first issue of the Omen next semester 2016F. I hope this will be a good way to carry the momentum from the valuable conversations and controversy currently taking place into the the new year. This is especially true if you are a DIV 3 student, because your voices won't be around next year in person.

I also want to praise the Hampshire student body as a whole for the remarkable lack of vitriol submitted to the Omen. At the same time, I know that there has been plenty of anger on this campus and that anger in non-written and unofficial form is much harder to deal with and respond to than published anger. In that sense, I almost wish that you would have given me a few more things for Section Hate. I can't decide if that section is usually so sparse because I generally try not to hate things or if it's because we actually don't get a lot of hateworthy things.

To me, one of the saddest things about college and school in general is that what is built seems to be lost with each year. Schools can create lasting institutions, but much of the strength from which an organization derives its power is from the people who are part of it. Every year, we lose students and every year we gain new ones who have to be re-educated. And I suppose that's the point of school in general.

In any case, thank you all for an awesome year, I look forward to writing and doing layout again next semester. Shout out to all past and future Omenites, we will miss you/are anxiously awaiting your arrival.

I'm hoping that the weird-looking zombie on the front cover attracts some attention...

Omen (not-quite-offical) Editrix,  
Chloe Omelchuck

**Shelley's Farewell Graduation I'm Leaving Omen Article/Unsolicited Guest Editorial!!**

Hey omen!

It's April 2016! (I don't care when this gets published let's all pretend it's April 2016 again) and I finished Div 3 and I'm graduating!

I was never actually officially an editor or a signer even though everyone on campus apparently thought I was despite constant corrections. And I did layout like way more than was appropriate given how when I was a first-year I wrote that article promising to never do layout again after The Poetry Incident. And like B basically always had to fix everything I did when I did layout anyway...

continued on the last page/ back cover...

# Section Speak

## Notes on the Community Meeting and the Nature of Discourse by Anthony Gabriel Santacruz

*" 'Critical' does not mean destructive, but only willing to examine what we sometimes presuppose in our way of thinking, and that gets in the way of making a more livable world." – Judith Butler*

When our community gathered at the town hall and the public forum was taken over by a few specific vocal students, there emerged an understanding of who is representing and advocating for students. Assuming that the students who spoke out represented the wider campus community, their statements should also be supported by everyone they claim to represent. This was in fact not the case. Their positions are not radical. The methods they deploy are not new. I do not see a shared willingness to engage with the entirety of our complex community. Hampshire College is our community, and during tumultuous times we must hold each other accountable. My question: is there a nonviolent approach?

The embrace of conflicting and contrasting narratives is at the core of what needs to be centered in order for the most vulnerable members of our community to be heard. Operating within a binary, or even on a rigid spectrum flattens critical difference. The community is being challenged to simultaneously unlearn internalized anti-blackness and radically engage in critical understandings and practices of decolonization; do right by our hearts at the expense of braving the irrational; and recognize privilege within while daring to speak out against abuses of power. However, when I look at recent "Actions of disruption", I am compelled to point out the [(un)intentional] effects of dehumanization, objectification, oppression, and erasure of bodies in our community. When specific people dominate

and control community discourse, they need to be accountable for the amount of space they inhabit and the implications of the mode of communication they are enacting.

It is vital that the most vulnerable voices need to be heard and supported at every level. In every instance, we must center our perspective from the most disadvantaged one in order to engage with the realities of living in an oppressive environment. We must also be critical of the dominant, most vocal students and hold them accountable for perpetuating the violation of others' right to participate in dialogue, and the silencing, re-traumatizing norms they are embracing. It's essential to uplift and bring to light erased complexities of all peoples' histories. Otherwise there is an inherent robbing of agency and dismissal of voices that share one collective community identity, but whose beliefs do not fall in line with the group claiming to advocate for everyone. Sweeping public generalizations that systematically categorize and inflict violence on other bodies is a continuation of how White Supremacy strategies prevent the entire community from embracing difference and collectively organizing against racism in all its forms.

A key strategy for this has to be creating and holding spaces to hear and look at differences and at conflicting realities. It helps reveal context-driven understandings of the present. In the current climate, the potential to generate

new realities after embracing multiple truths is being constricted, right at the heart of our need to organize and collaborate together. There is a clear, shared understanding that the most vulnerable voices need to be heard and incorporated into understanding the workings of power, but there also needs to be a shared willingness to engage in dialogue with the community as a whole, a willingness to meet and listen to people where they are. The community needs to imagine together and brave the possibility of establishing a new system that discontinues the mirrored structures of oppression—so that we may see each member of our community for their entirety, and create ways to collaborate while being aware of difference among us and the urgency to create and enable change together.

## Hi Beth, Byron, and Eva,

I am writing to you in light of recent events wherein emails from Beth Ward on behalf of the administration have been sent to students of color telling them that they are making people on campus feel unsafe and threatened.

Given that Hampshire made a commitment in 2014 to being an “actively anti-racist institution” I am sure I do not have to explain to you how narratives of men of color being “threatening” and “aggressive” are rooted in colonial justifications for violent rule; dehumanizing subjects in Africa, Asia, Polynesia, and the Americas by painting them as less civil than the white colonizers.

I have not heard of any of the white student activists on campus being contacted telling them that they are being hostile. Plenty of white students were being just as loud and aggressive during and after the All-Community Meeting and I have personally seen plenty of racism directed at specific students of color from white students in recent weeks, especially on anonymous forums such as Yik Yak.

It is baffling to me that it is only the activists of color being sent these emails, given that I, personally, as a campus activist in the past, had done plenty of aggressive and threatening things. At no point was I ever told I was being too aggressive or hostile. I think I may have made actual threats at certain points, which none of the known recipients of these emails regarding hostility has done. The only other difference is that I am white.

While I can see how mentioning specific names of administrators and students on trustee committees could be scary for those who wish to avoid being held accountable, I do not think it is classified as threatening behavior



^ submitted by Maya Gilmore



any more than when John Oliver calls out congressmen on television. Those who serve on campus committees, staff or student, are not exempt from being named and criticized. When one chooses to serve as a trustee or on a committee which impacts students, students have the right to know who those students and staff are and hold them accountable in public. In the past when I had attempted to hold students on committees accountable through official non-public campus procedures (i.e. community review board), my complaints were dismissed and nothing was done. Yet that process was also dragged out for over a month and was emotionally draining because of how it resembled when I had filed a Title IX complaint. I eventually gave up on pushing the issues to keep the process from draining me entirely.

It is also the case that the current systems for holding staff accountable are totally inadequate. I, personally, never felt safe reporting, for instance, that during my first year, Troy Davis had hit on me on a dating app and used his position at financial aid as part of his "flirting." I only feel comfortable stating that now because I am graduating. Students are afraid to report staff. If we cannot handle the issue privately, we must handle the issue publicly in order to protect each other and ensure that if we are ignored that it goes on public record.

When there are no systems we can trust that are not public, we must resort to the public. I can only conclude that these emails being sent to activists of color are intended as an intimidation tactic. If students are told that publicly criticizing administrators and student trustees will get them in trouble, then perhaps they will be afraid to speak up. The narrative of activists being "too hostile" is all too familiar on the national stage in regards to pretty much every act of anti-racist activism in history. Is public criticism of campus politicians not allowed? Is John Adams president? Was the Alien and Sedition Act brought back? How are

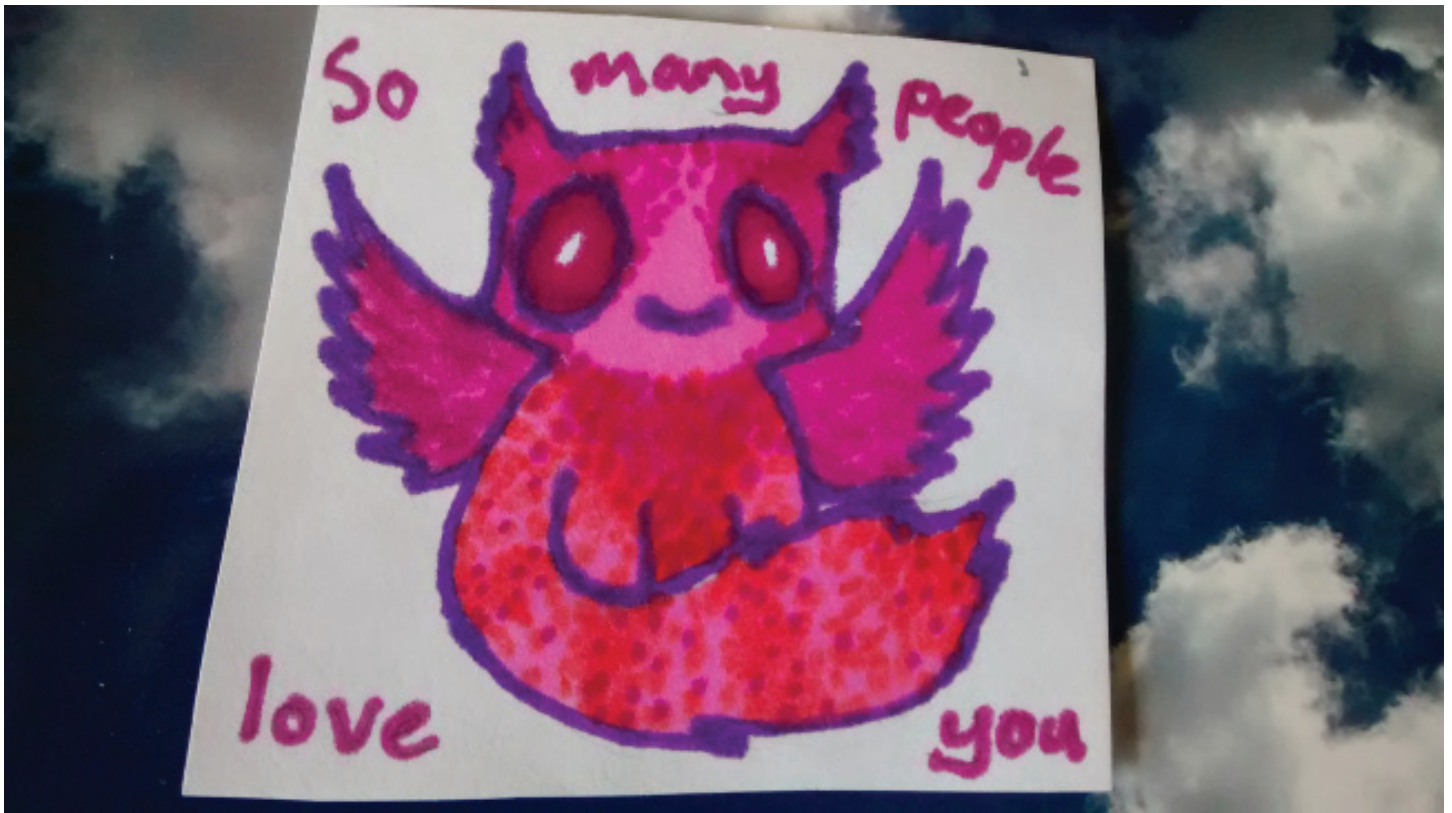
we to hold anyone accountable if we must work within systems run by the very people we wish to hold accountable!

The only staff in recent memory who were ever held accountable for their actions are Renee Freedman and Ralph Hexter. Both of whom were only finally replaced after students went public with their complaints and utilized "aggressive" and "hostile" tactics to shine light on the matter. Students have forced the need for a new president in the past. I'm sure they could force the need for new Vice Presidents as well. Even a new secretary of the college. Of course, that's not up to me, since I'm graduating. (Despite the best efforts of the college to push me out.)

I am CC-ing The Omen and The Howler for posterity. I'm sure the Republican and the Boston Globe would also be interested if it came to light that the Hampshire College Administration has been attempting to silence students of color for their anti-racism activism and activism around the college's failure to support survivors of sexual assault of color. On another note, it seems unclear if President Lash will be well enough for commencement. In that event, would I be shaking one of your hands at commencement? I'll be looking forward to it :).

Warmly,  
Shelley Rosen F12

P.S. I am also very looking forward to Xavier Torres de Janon's speech. Since the administration did not choose a single one of the keynote speakers we nominated, or give us the option to have input on who was chosen instead; I am glad we will at least be able to have the student speaker that we all voted for. Someone who represents us, specifically, the graduating class and soon-to-be alumni.



^submitted by Maya Gilmore

## How To Have Creative Freedom In a Capitalist Society

By Matt Rosenblum

For Karl Marx, work—creative activity—is the defining feature of human life. We have been creating things since the beginning of humanity. We create in order to satisfy our various needs. To satisfy our need for hunger, we learned how to create food. To satisfy our need for protection, we learned how to create shelter. After satisfying our safety and physiological needs we move on to creating things that satisfy our intellectual, moral, and artistic needs—the so called “higher needs” in human beings.

People connect with us through our creative activity—there is no other way to connect. When we express something, we actualize ourselves, or in other words push ourselves into the world, becoming real. If we express nothing, no one would know who we are—including ourselves. What is internal—our ideas and feelings—is private. No one can see those things until we’ve

expressed them through our creative activity. If we want to connect with ourselves and the world’s needs, self-actualize, and live up to our potential, production AKA expression AKA creative activity—work—should be our highest aim.

In a capitalist society, we often lose sight of the importance of creative freedom—the ability to create what we are genuinely interested in creating. According to Marx, capitalism consists of some people who are owners (bourgeoisie/capitalists), and other people who are workers (proletariat). The workers produce and create things, which on the surface seems good, because creative activity is what we want. The problem, however, is that the workers are not in control of their creative activity. They don’t own or choose what they do. Workers think they choose what they do by picking the right fields

and the right jobs—they might even have some say in what they do in those jobs—but when it comes down to it, the owner, the capitalist determines and influences what the worker does. The worker is creatively unfree, because their creative activity comes from the outside.

The owner has power over the worker because the owner owns what Marx calls “the means of production.” What this means is that the owner controls the instruments which allow creative activity to happen. Imagine a person who owns a bunch of musical instruments—tubas, guitars, pianos, drums, and a recording studio. Imagine that this person owns these instruments, but doesn’t actually use them him/herself. This instrument owner merely hires musicians to make songs for the owner to sell. The musician doesn’t own any instruments or a recording studio him/herself, so needs to work under the owner in order to create. The owner defines and decides what kind of music he/she wants, and lets the musician know that he/she will pay them after selling the musician’s songs. Personally speaking, the musician may like jazz, but the owner wants the musician to make pop music. The musician, who needs money in order to survive, agrees to play pop music, going against his/her “genuine creative interests,” in Marxian terms.

The songs are a big hit, and the owner collects money from the album sales. In return for the hard work of the musician, the owner gives the musician just enough money to survive and produce more songs, which leads to more money for the owner. Marx thinks this process is akin to a sort of slavery—the musician is what Marx calls a wage-slave (or salary-slave). The musician, the worker, for Marx, is “alienated” from his/her creativity because he/she doesn’t have the control to create what he/she genuinely wants to create. The musician may trick him/herself into thinking that he/she is being freely creative, because the musician got to decide how the songs sound. The musician, according to Marx, however, is just deluding him/herself, because the creative choices about

the music, in reality, come from the owner.

Marx calls the capitalist society one of “alienated labor,” where labor means creative activity, and alienated means disconnected. So essentially, Marx thinks we are disconnected from our creative activity. In a capitalist society, workers get to be creative, but due to a need to survive they don’t get creative freedom—the ability to create what one genuinely wants to create. Meanwhile the bourgeoisie/owners/capitalists get all the money from the workers without doing any of the creative work. The owners simply own the instruments which make creative work possible, and profit off that. Not only do they exploit (take advantage of) their workers creative efforts, they miss out on their own creative expression and freedom! Though a necessary step in the evolution of society, capitalism simply isn’t an ideal setting for those who want creative freedom.

Practically speaking, what can we do about our lack of creative freedom? Marx says that in capitalism, creative unfreedom (alienation), comes from not owning the instruments that make creative work possible. The example that Marx gave more than 100 years ago, was that workers don’t own factories, which makes owning their own work really difficult since buying a factory is really expensive. The world is a lot different today, because our work is much less reliant on factories. In the 21st century information age, we have access to plenty of creative instruments for free or cheap—the instruments for creative activity are a lot more accessible. We have our own free video distribution hub—youtube. We can write and distribute whatever we want for free online—wordpress. If we have access to a mac, we can record music, download thousands of apps, and create presentations. Apps can help us create pretty much anything we want. At most, to get started, we might need to buy a computer and some art supplies. In the 21st century, most of us from a relatively privileged background have cheap access to the instruments that make creative work possible.



Sadly, we often don't take advantage of this.

Marx says the solution to overcoming capitalist alienation is not to stop creating (which he thinks is what life is about), but to merge creative activity and ownership into one. He suggests that we should become owners, but instead of managing the creative activity of others, we should manage the creative activity of ourselves. We should create things that we define and plan ourselves. We should also abandon our dependence on salary and contract work to the best of our ability, because this work comes from our owners.

But is any of this practical? How are we supposed to survive off of no salary or wage? What do we do about money? Why would anyone care about our creative work? When it comes down to practice, we need money in order to buy food, rent, and other necessities. Consequently, we need to embrace money to some degree in order to satisfy our needs and be free—therefore, we should not totally abandon money. After freely creating our own work, we should put an appropriate price tag on our work, share our creation, invest our money into things we care about, and move on to creating the next thing. In this way, we embrace creative freedom by owning our work, yet embrace the practicalities of living in a capitalist society.

As we develop our creative freedom (which is a challenging process), we will likely need to take on wages, contracts, and salaries to some degree in order to satisfy basic needs. We can think of this submission to the system as a necessary training phase that helps us cultivate our creative abilities. If we choose the right jobs, it will help us learn a lot of creative skills in the process. It's fine to be okay with this stage of working under someone, as long as we keep cultivating our genuine creativity. Marx, in reality, wasn't an anti-capitalist, but a post-capitalist; he saw capitalism as a necessary stage in personal and social development. Being completely resistant to this necessary stage will lead to misery and depletion of our

energy. If we are too busy trying to destroy capitalism, we'll have no energy left to increase our genuine creative abilities, which is the goal beyond it.



**RIP Prince**

"All people care about nowadays is getting paid, so they try to do just what the audience wants them to do. I'd rather give people what they need rather than just what they want."  
— Prince

Please enjoy a few of our favorite Prince tributes on Elio.

^ Courtesy of Elio (I'm not sure how it got the Omen email, but we've gotten so much stuff. I don't even know what ello is.)

# SECTION LIES

## **Plastic Sonnet** **By Temperance Dewar**

"Within the cerebral structure there is something like a poetic activity or a wordless recitative function:" (Catherine Malabou, What Should We Do With Our Brain?)

My love, you have a plastic mind  
Which waxy wanes and droops untended  
In part by genes and world designed  
But the archaic may be bended  
If you would know that which thou art  
It is the former and the form  
The part from which you cannot part  
It has no center and no start  
Signs enter, touch, affect, refract  
And self reflects to represent  
Itself in the poetic act  
But you, unconscious of the fact,  
    Let others make you to their gain—  
    Oh, shake them off, and seize your brain!

## **Prescott, Fall 2015** **By Temperance Dewar**

With numb appendages I quickly dress  
The cold's the perfect cure for drowsiness

Certain their trembling smiles will warm me  
through  
More than the coffee on its own could do

I wake before my modmates, and with haste  
Prepare a pot of coffee I'll not taste

While it's dripping I will sit and wait  
Pressing my nose against the window plate

Below on the gazebo baluster

Flutters a dew-bejeweled and lonesome sweater

Along the balcony most outermost  
A plastic lawn chair haunts like Hamlet's ghost

The boys that block the walk in statuettes  
Have not yet woken to their cigarettes

And all the buildings look more peaceable  
When they are fat and undisturbed and full

Love calls to me, misunderstood but heard  
As through the fog an unfamiliar bird

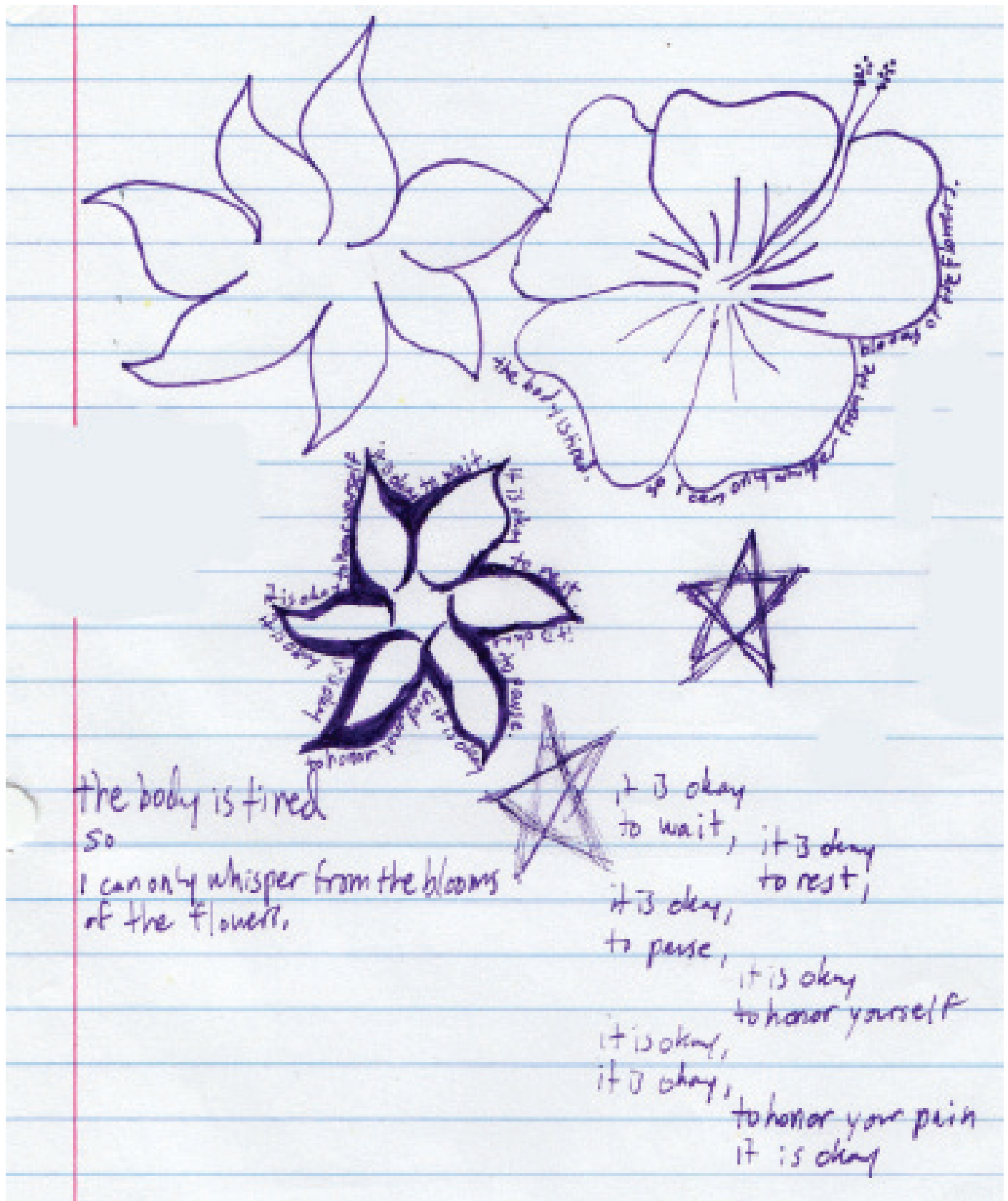
And I hear rustling. It's almost eight  
I flip the coffee switch to 'off' and wait

My modmates slowly stumble from their rooms  
Unfolding like damp moths from split cocoons

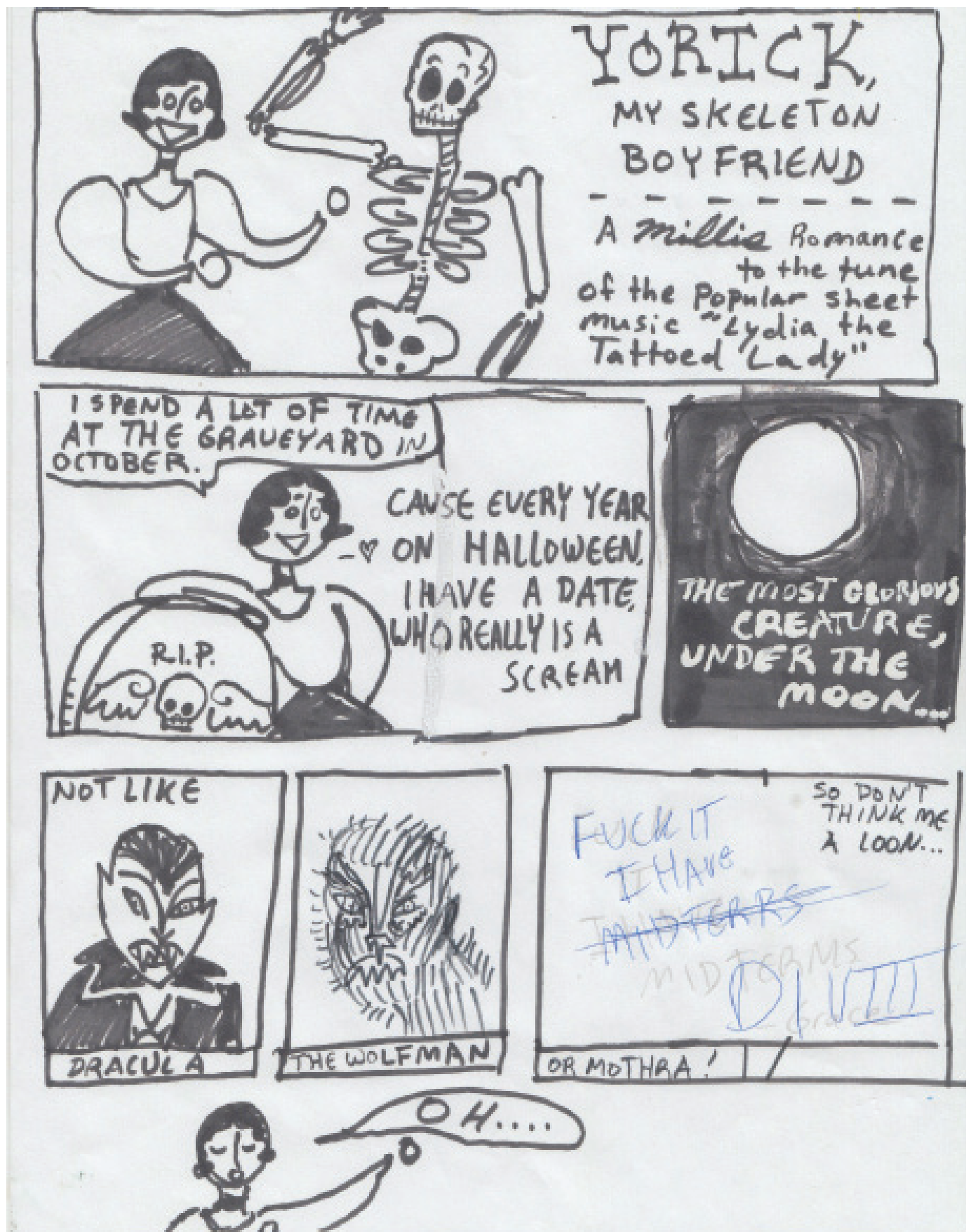
Then one by one they ask if they may pour  
A cup of coffee from my steaming store

A mighty king could not so have accrued  
A wealth as mine through smiles of gratitude

I hoard my pleasure like a honeybee  
Who loves to share, but only selfishly.



^Submitted by Sara Turner



^submitted by Grace Willey



RIP  
ZOMBIE

Scientists have estimated that the chances of something as patently absurd as zombies actually existing are millions to one.

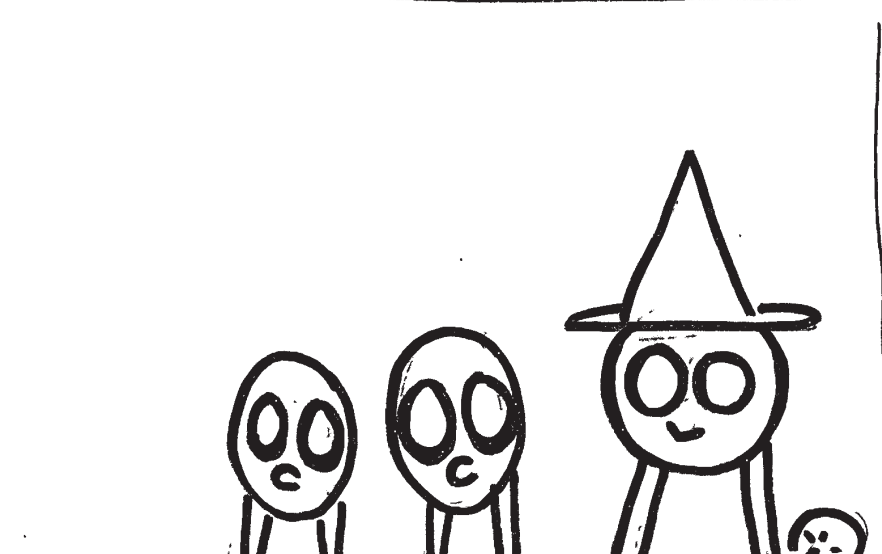
What's with the hat?  
I'm a magician!  
Of course



**SHEBANG!**

Muahahahahaaaaa!!!!  
AHHRG...  
Ahhhhh!

AHHHHRG?



Magicians have calculated that million-to-one-chances crop up nine times out of ten.

# SECTION

## BYRON AND SHELLEY

A very OMEN discourse, brought to you by the submissions of Shelly Rosen and Byron P. Mcrae

### Hi Byron & Pam,

It has come to my attention that recently an anonymous group of trans woman exterminatory feminists calling themselves the "Radical Alliance of Womyn at Hampshire College" has distributed a transmisogynist zine in the dining commons. This pattern of open hate speech on campus, following the swastika graffiti in the dorms, has me greatly concerned for the safety of Hampshire campus for trans women. I should not have to explain to you why ideology that seeks to exterminate deviance from western colonial genders and enforce the sex-binary, born out of scientific racism, should not be condoned on this campus.

As it stands, I and a small handful of others in my year are slated to be the first out trans women to graduate from Hampshire in over 4 years (and most of us are white and from middle-to-upper class backgrounds). The vast majority of trans women and trans feminine people I know have dropped out of Hampshire or transferred, typically due to mental health concerns arising from living on a campus hostile to trans women. As the Gender Resource Network seeks new signers, every single trans women I've talked to about signing has responded not by saying that they don't want to sign for the group, but that they are unsure if they will still be enrolled next semester. This "Radical Alliance of Womyn at Hampshire College"'s zine distributed in the dining commons is a prominent display of the hostile transmisogynist environment on campus that I

and others deal with at Hampshire on a daily basis. Where cis women audibly remark on whether "it's a woman trying to be a man or a man trying to be a woman" when I walk by.

In 2014 during GRN's "CRINGE" ("Central Records Inclusive Name & Gender Expectations") initiative, we interviewed all staff on campus who work frequently with student records. We were told by Meredith Twombly that the gender identity field on the Hampshire application is "just there to show trans-friendliness." This is not an ethical act when the administration has taken no actions to protect trans students institutionally for transphobic violence, and as I will go on to describe, transphobia is institutionally enacted by Hampshire College. We learned while interviewing Amy Parker in the HOO that gendered halls for first-years are assigned based on being "female-bodied" or "male-bodied". We learned that there is a program called Colleague Informer which any staff person can use to access the legal name of any student, and that this field is simply labeled "first name." To be able to see that one's legal name is not the same as their "preferred" name is in many cases to know that individual is trans, and puts that individual at risk for experiencing transphobic violence. This unethical access provided to staff results in many occurrences of the legal names of all students being mass-published, such as the annual Bridge valentine's day exhibit, which really should have been institutionally banned by now. Our attempts to

work with Jefferey Butera on protecting trans students's legal names in Colleague, so they can only be accessed on a need-to-know basis by authorized staff, was met with transphobic hostility. By the end of the semester we were all too tired of experiencing transphobic microaggressions and hostility from the staff we were interviewing, and offering to work with, to continue the CRINGE initiative. In general, the transmisogyny and ableism I faced at every turn was why I personally eventually burned out and ceased engaging in any campus politics. I got sick of being exploited for free labor and compensated in microaggressions.

This recent development of a trans women exterminatory zine being distributed on campus has only shown the kind of environment the administration has allowed to continue to develop.

Numerous studies, such as Burn, S., Kadlec, K., & Rexer, R. (2005); Huebner, D.M., & Davis, M. C. (2007); Mays & Cochran, (2001); Meyer, (1995); Nadal, Davidoff, Davis, & Wong, (2014); & Nadal, Skolnik, & Wong, (2012) have found that experiencing direct and environmental microaggressions has not just an impact on mental health but also on physical health. This zine is an act of aggression and spreads hostility towards trans women on campus.

I expect this matter to be handled and investigated similarly to the swastika graffiti and other hate speech on campus, and likewise for an all-campus email to be sent out addressing the matter and asserting that Hampshire does not condone transmisogyny and trans exterminatory ideologies. I am graduating and cannot participate as a student in any efforts to reform institutional transphobia, particularly transmisogyny on campus. I would strongly suggest that you hire a trans woman or trans feminine person, student or otherwise, to work with you in this process. You already have

numerous jumping off points that the members of GRN have already investigated for you for free, and we would be happy to send you our full notes from CRINGE if you decide to take on such an endeavor. As usual you'd be welcome to brag about all this for positive press, but I would hope that this time if you do that you follow it up with actual results.

For the sake of accountability I have CC'd the Omen and the Howler. I expect to be getting an email from HCAnnouncements shortly ;)

Warmly,  
Shelley Rosen F12

P.S.

If you would like to know more about microaggressions, you can read my div 3! <http://sailingroughwaters.com> Which I made because of all the people I know struggling to survive at Hampshire due to microaggressions on campus. As an institution, you got to be an inspiration! Aren't you proud?

**Shelly,**

I will send a message very soon. I met with staff members this morning to gather some facts and ask many questions to help guide our response. We would like to have a meeting open to the community to discuss, as we did with the other hate speech. I saw that faculty members were cc: on several email messages and invite feedback on whether those faculty might be good facilitators for a meeting, or if students have other ideas (on whether to have a meeting, if there is another mechanism we should explore, etc.).

Thank you for writing. I will send a message to the campus community shortly.

Byron

**Submitted by Shelley:**

Behold the extremely brief response to transmisogyny. At least there was one?

—— Forwarded message ——

From: HCAnnouncements <HCAnnouncements@hampshire.edu>

Date: Mon, Apr 18, 2016, 11:38 AM

Subject: Concerns about transphobia and transmisogyny

To:

This message was automatically distributed by the Hampshire College announcement system. To verify its sender and the authenticity of its contents, go to <https://intranet.hampshire.edu>.

Submitted by: Byron McCrae

We have received reports that a transmisogynist zine was present in the dining commons last night, April 17, 2016. We are collecting more information about the incident and the group that published the zine. Transphobia and transmisogyny are threats to the wellness and safety of trans women. These ideologies are also based in oppression and linked to other forms of hate that require our shared attention. We intend to work with students and faculty to convene a meeting to discuss these concerns. Updates will be provided in the Daily Digest.

***Are hurtful, oppressive comments and actions  
weighing you down like a  
thousand paper cuts?***

***<http://SailingRoughWaters.com>***



***Sailing Rough Waters is a website about coping with microaggressions: the small things that hurt in daily life and target parts of your identity. The site is written with accessibility and readability as the primary focus. Learn skills to deal with the stress and pain from experiencing racist, (cis)sexist, ableist, and homophobic microaggressions on a regular basis.***

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***SECTION***

***HATE***



# Honesty is literally always the best policy:

What I want to say is this: Hampshire, be honest with your students about what you are (AKA: Not a utopia, not perfect, sometimes traumatic and oppressive and terrible).

What I don't want to say is this: Hampshire, you fucking suck. You are a shithole and no one should go here. You are not worth saving, and everyone associated with you has fucked up.

We have all been lied to. That's not okay. But I would still be here even if I had known all this from the start (which is kind of why I think it should be public from the start: so people can make an actual informed decision. Wouldn't it have been nice to really know about what any college is like in high school? I think I would've seriously considered going to a college that was honest about its campus politics just for the honesty and the real, unbiased look at what college is like).

Let me take a radical position: I like Hampshire, and I don't think the administrators are evil, and I believe this place is both possible to change and worth changing. It will never be perfect, but I think it can be good and a place of value.

You can disagree with me if you want, and I think your anger is valid and important. I get that for many of us, Hampshire is an only option, a last option, the best place and still not good enough, and that is incredibly unfair and fucked up and frustrating.

But I wish that 'Hampshire sucks' was not the only opinion that's been visible to me, because I don't think it's everyone's opinion, and I think it's also, beyond the value of anger as energy and as loudspeaker/jackhammer, unproductive. I want to be able to focus on changing Hampshire, and it frustrates me that all the talk

seems to be hating on Hampshire.

Because when the only takeaway is 'fuck Hampshire', you make students who do like it here avoid anything you're saying and not want to engage with helping-with-change. Because negativity and anger matter, but they also shouldn't stick around forever. Because I really like being here, and want to change it for the better.

tl;dr: The formula I've been seeing a lot is 'this negative thing about Hampshire exists, therefore, fuck Hampshire.' I think a better option would be 'this negative thing about Hampshire exists, so let's change it, because we care about this community and want it to be better,' or even just 'this negative thing about Hampshire exists.'

Sincerely, but with a good spin,  
Maya Gilmore

## Found in the Omen Inbox the next day:

**What I previously wrote did not leave space. It stole it from people who deserve it, and pretended respect. I am sorry.**

**I will try to do better.**  
**Maya Gilmore**

**PS: Omen, if you can, I would like my previous submission deleted, and this one. If you won't, so be it.**

A brief response to Maya's article:

As another Hampshire student, I have never assumed that Hampshire was a utopia. I assumed that Hampshire wasn't perfect, that it would occasionally be traumatic and oppressive and terrible. This is because, though Hampshire is certainly much different than the rest of world, it's still part of the world. Reality will never be a utopia (read any book based on a utopia besides the original and you'll find this is true).

When I came to Hampshire I came assuming that it was going to be a safe space to discuss difficult issues, not that it would be a space somehow removed from those difficult issues. I came with the mentality that Hampshire isn't here to change the world; we're at Hampshire to learn how to change the world.

Maybe it's just me?

Chloe Omelchuck

(publish this whole email)

The Howler contacted me soliciting my "inflammatory opinions on campus politics" so this is what I sent them: My solicited inflammatory opinions for the Howler:

Hampshire is institutionally racist, transphobic, ableist, etc. etc. This is unremarkable for a college.

As an institution it exploits students for free labor, brags about them, and does nothing to actually change.

Let me make something clear. Shared campus governance isn't real. It's made up. Authority is not distributed, it is delegated. All authority is always still held by the Trustees and their delegates. Nothing stops anything you once did, no matter how "binding," from being ignored. The administration can and will "forget" and pretend nothing ever happened. They are not bound, and will just do whatever they want.

The campus is a sandbox. It is designed to let you feel like you've making a difference, so you can learn from it, and when you leave it is reverted so another student can have the same experience. Hampshire is Zion in the

Matrix Sequels. It is erased and reset the same ways over and over and nobody realizes that they are not the first Involved Students to tackle whatever issue they are the 6th the 10th the 15th iteration. They only find out right when they graduate and are forgotten.

This is all probably also unremarkable for a private liberal arts college. I think Hampshire cloaks it more than other colleges, and that Hampshire attracts students who get more passionate about it than other colleges. That doesn't really matter in the end.

There is no institutional memory and that's not an accident. See: the Disorientation Packet (oops, 90% of you don't know what that is.)

The Omen is the only archive of student activism and campus drama in the 21st century. I made an archive you can read at <http://bork.hampshire.edu/~omen> but we'll see how long that stays up / keeps being updated after I graduate. I recommend Stephen Morton's editorial from Volume 34. Issue 8. It's very relevant.

IMO you're all better served spending your activist energy off-campus. If anyone from the administration asks you to help them make campus better in whatever capacity, ask them how much they're paying you for this job they're offering. See how their tune changes. They won't even want to give you "credit" for it. They want you to do it for free as a "resume builder" while managing a full courseload. I wish I hadn't bothered with campus politics and had just focused on my academics and engaged more off-campus. Hampshire actually does have a very good academic program.

So as a final goodbye before I leave, here is a string of statements:

The Thriver's admissions policy is racist and ableist.

Social Entrepreneurship is just a regular Business program and why anyone would think a food truck is a "social cause" is beyond me.

The student information management system (datatel/colleague) needs reforming and to be taken out of the hands of the current transphobe in charge of it.

The very concept of student government is stupid on a campus this small since we can all just meet with deans ourselves anyway.  
HYPE is ableist.

Direct Action is the only praxis worth trying on campus.

Orientation Leaders and RAs deserve pay now and forever.

The Homestuck ending was dissatisfying and anticlimactic.

SAGA is never going to be something you're excited to eat everyday, it's just a cafeteria so give them some slack.

Joining the Omen is your only hope.

So yeah, have fun kids. Don't feel too bad about burning out in a couple years. Burning out was the best thing to happen to me.

-Shelley Rosen

continued from the editorial page...

BUT the Omen is still important to me and I'm graduating and I feel like I should write something about that!! Every editor always writes something when they graduate and since I was "shadow editor" during that silly plot arch w/ the fake election I figure I should write a "shadow something" (a technical term) I built the dang website and put "Web Developer and Archivist" on my resume from that so I was still involved you know. I was a recurring character. I'm graduating!! FUCK. Life was pretty fucking turbulent for me these past four years but they were also by far the best four years of my life. I learned so much in so many ways. The legacy of Omen Alumni had legit been like family to me and during my hardest times The Omen was there for me. The Omen gave me the tough love I needed as a first-year to get past some shitty opinions and The Omen gave me something to let go of a little as I started taking steps away from campus. Reading the Omen Archives is what gave me the perspective I needed to re-evaluate how I engaged with campus politics. The Omen is what got me into making websites and The Omen was my first steps into archival work and library sciences which is now like my fucking career path or something???

It seems stupid to get some emotional about our absurd dadaist rag that has apparently gone **from** political soapbox to surreal collage zine recently? Whatever. the Omen will always be the Omen and that's all it really needs to be.

I can't promise I won't ever end up at another omen layout but if I do it will be a special occasion yeah? Like, because I'm visiting or something. Or because I'm hungry. But like, hungry in a special way.

Anyway, I'm going to put two things in this and then sign off. My list of things I consider to be most important for omen staff to remember to do, and my advice for future students at each stage of being a student.

### **The Most Important Things To Remember To Do When Making The Omen**

1. Sending out listserv emails about layout meetings, because layout isn't consistently every week, it's so important that you remind people when it is! Otherwise you'll never be able to get new members.
  2. Properly attribute submissions to authors, I've seen a few articles in recently issues without an author-name anywhere near it! This is bad! We don't publish anonymous content like some other rag!
  3. Put issues in as many places as possible, just SAGA is not enough. Post office people!! And I know it's hard but try to get it out before the next layout comes or else nobody is gonna submit anything.
  4. Archive everything! Save at least 5 copies of every printed issue in the office somewhere. Save the PDFs on the layout computer and upload them to <http://bork.hampshire.edu/~omen> !! (If you don't know how, I will happily show you how! This is a standing offer as an alum!) The Omen Archives are the only thing we have at Hampshire resembling institutional memory. This is extremely crucial imo.
  5. Be provocative and controversial and cause a ruckus, now this isn't to say you should say harmful things! You should say things that are strong, like "men should be banned from all bathrooms" but still punch up! The goal is to get people to write angry responses to the Omen! The Omen is at its best when you get two people arguing back and forth in it! Also! People being angry in the Omen helps it be a better archive of student actions and opinions! If nobody gets pissed off and submits something to the Omen about that all-community meeting, nobody will remember there ever was one.
- Advice for Hampshire Students For Each Year
1. First years: Nobody needs to be caught up on your whole life before college. But it's crucial that you don't forget your life before college. Maintain continuity between yourself before and after orientation. Remember why you

are cool and strong. Keep track of how long you've known your new friends and act appropriately. 2 Months is not very long to know someone. Take advantage of Div 1 and really explore different fields, even if you think you already know what you want to study. Take advantage of CEL-1 to do something cool rather than rush it in with some boring student group. Consider starting therapy now rather than waiting until you're a div 3.

2. Second-Years: You cannot stop the first-years from making the same mistakes you did. You can try in vain to warn them, intervene, and give advice, but they will ignore you and fall into the same traps no matter what. Stand back and be there for them when that happens. Just because you've filed for Div 2 doesn't mean it's too late to change your Div 2 entirely halfway through your second year. It's only one semester of classes that you've already done and if you're finding a new passion now then that's a good sign you should follow it. Campus-politics are tempting but don't participate in it unless you're getting course-credit or money. It might feel like your whole life is here but you'll be gone before you know it. Hampshire has a great academic program and focusing on your academics more than campus politics will give you a much better time.

3. Third-years: At this point, you should look at your commitments and activities on campus, and start quitting at least one each semester. Start filing things down to a point. Keep only that which you feel the best about and which will help you the most after college/you will learn the most from. Resume-building might be slimy but the point of college is to get stuff for after. Do your CEL-2 off-campus if you can, such as by working with a local organization, it will be a lot more rewarding. Make sure you do at least one formal independent study around now to prepare you for div 3. Consider moving off campus next year, it's 40% the cost and you won't miss living on campus once you're off-campus. It's OK if you feel like maybe you should take a semester off.

4. fourth years: Don't do a div 3 that's totally unrelated to your div 2!!! Do a project that specializes in where your skill-set is the best. If you studied psychology, don't do a documentary film on meercat mating behaviors. Make sure you get the people you need feedback from on your committee. Don't be afraid to ask people you haven't worked with before. Don't be afraid to reach outside your department. Take a div 3 seminar if you can. Don't wait until commencement to apply for jobs. Go to as many alumni-networking events as you possibly can. Don't procrastinate applying to great opportunities until they expire. Start writing ASAP and try to be 50-60% done by the time Spring semester begins, cuz you have to finish div 3 earlier than when you'd normally finish classes in Spring. Don't be picky with who you invite to your bell-ringing. Don't worry about missing student groups and events or overall ignoring literally everything but your diiiiv that isn't necessary to keep your body functioning and your mental health adequate. There is nothing wrong with staying in the valley after graduation there's plenty of community around here totally separate from the colleges.

OK!!!

I'm doing it!

I'm ending my omen career!

This is the conclusion to my character arc in the omen archives!

Chloe I'm sure you'll do a good job and remember to do those important things that are important.

Also try harder to poach angry articles back from the Howler. I know that they're all gonna burn out and go away pretty soon but like, they're still stealing all the good Omen content!! You gotta antagonize them a little more!!

Goodbye hampshire! I'm graduating! hollly shit!!! I feel like I should have something more meaningful to say but I honestly can't think of anything besides bye, I love you, don't touch the poison that is student government.  
<3 <3 <3 <3 <3 <3 <3

Shelley Rosen F12

Former "shadow editor", I built the omen site.